THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indo-Nepal Treaty of Trade, as modified in December 1996, facilitates preferential access to the Indian market for items manufactured in Nepal. However, the Treaty also provided that if it is found that the facility has led to a surge in the imports from Nepal generally or in the import of any particular article, the two Governments, shall enter into consultations with each other for taking appropriate measures. Data reported in the representations on the subject received by Govt. has been examined by the concerned Departments and it has been found that it does not establish any surge in imports of vanaspati oils etc. from Nepal after December, 1996.

Target for Export-Growth

657. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had targeted an export growth rate of 18 per cent for the current year;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the export growth rate in 1997-98 will probably touch not more than 10 per cent considering the present trend;

(c) if so, the details and reasons for low rate of export growth; and

(d) remedial steps proposed to be taken to boost export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) A target growth of 18% in US $ terms was envisaged for exports during 1997-98. As per the latest DGCI&S data exports have registered a growth 4.22% in dollar terms during the period April—September, 1997 over the corresponding period in the previous years.

(c) and (d) Export performance is influenced inter alia by international market conditions, sectoral strengths and problems, infrastructural bottlenecks and policy framework. Export promotional measures are continuously taken by the Government through policies and procedures, by providing the export friendly environment, interaction with trade and industry, involvement of State Government in export promotion etc. Government have taken a number of measures recently including decisions on trade matters in the newly created Export Promotion Board.

विदेशों में भारत की जड़ी-बूटियों, मसालों आदि का पेटेंटीकरण

658. **प्रो० विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा:** क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) भारत की कौन-कौन सी जड़ी-बूटियों, मसालों, पेड़-पौधों के अंगों को विदेशों में पेटेंट कराया गया है; और

(ख) हजारों वर्षों से प्रयोग में आ रही इन वस्तुओं के पेटेंटीकरण को रोकने के लिए सरकार क्या कदम उठा रही है?

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री बोल्ला बुल्ली रमैया): सूचना एकत्र की जा रही है और सदन के पटल पर रख दी जाएगी।

Time-frame for removing Import Restriction

659. SHRI K.R. MALKANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have reduced the time-frame and agreed to remove restrictions on import of several agricultural products from developed countries like U.S.A. European Union, Australia and Switzerland (vide Observer, 28.1.97);

(b) the rational for encouraging imports; and

(c) the impact of such import of non-essentials on Indian Industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (c) Pursuant to the meeting of the Committee on Balance of Payments Restrictions of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) held on 20-21 January, 1997, India presented to the WTO on 19 May, 1997 a plan for the elimination of all residual quantitative restrictions on imports, including those on agricultural products maintained for balance of payments purposes. This plan was considered at the resumed consultations with India of the WTO Committee in June-July 1997, when noting the divergence of opinion among WTO Members on the plan, it was agreed to conclude the consultations.

Subsequently, six WTO Members, namely, Australia, Canada, the European Communities (EC), New Zealand, Switzerland and the United States of America (USA), requested consultations with India under Article XXII of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994 and the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes. Pursuant to these consultations agreement has been reached with Australia, Canada, the EC, New Zealand and Switzerland in respect of the time-schedules for the elimination of residual quantitative restrictions on imports maintaned for balance of payments purposes. At the request of the USA, a panel has been constituted on 18 November 1997 to examine the US allegation that the continued maintenance of quantitative restrictions on imports by India is inconsistent with India's obligations under the WTO Agreement.

Article XI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994 provides that no prohibitions or restrictions other than duties, taxes or charges, whether made effective through quotas, import or export licences or other measures shall be maintained by any Member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). However, under the exceptional provisions of Article XVIII of the GATT, India has some residual quantitative restrictions on imports maintaned for balance of payments purposes.

Export of Cycle and Cycle-Parts

660. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the value of exports of cycles and cycle parts from India during the years 1995-96 as also the trend in the first quarter of the current year;

(b) the reasons for declining export trends in this industry;

(c) whether Government have received representation from the cycle industry that the capping of draw-back rates for cycle parts made effective by September, 1997 notification will usher a death-knell for the cycle industry; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The value of exports of cycles and cycle parts from India as well as trend in the first quarter of the current year is given below:—

(value in Rs. Crores)

Year	Complete cycles	Parts	Total
1995-96	142.18	595.42	737.60
1996-97	130.85	360.17	491.02
April-June '96 (prov.)	34.05	107.64	141.69
April-June '97	31.77	75.92	107.69

Source : DGCI&S

(b) The export of bicycles and parts suffered due to severe recession in the bicycle market in France & Germany. France has changed the SKD condition in its bicycle policy and now only complete bicycles can be imported into France. The exports to Latin America and Africa have also suffered due to economic conditions in these regions. Brazil has imposed Anti dumping duty on imports of 'free wheels' from India. Price cut by China in the US market is also another